Problems faced by investors in mining sector

†3045. SHR1 P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the investors in mining sector have drawn Government's attention towards the problems being faced by them in this sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to amend the flight rules in order to arrange for air survey by the companies; and

(d) if so, the concrete steps taken by Government to remove the difficulties being faced in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKER PRASAD): (a) and (b) Recently, a tripartite meeting of Central Government, State Governments and investors in the mining sector was held for possible redressal of problems faced by the investors. The issues raised by the investors related to simplification of procedure for grant of permission for airborne geophysical surveys, problems in gaining access to geophysical data etc.

(c) and (d) One of the issues raised by the investors regarding simplification of procedure for grant of permission for airborne geophysical surveys related to expediting the clearances for aerial flying and lowering the permissible limits for such flying. The issues raised were noted by the representative of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), and it was decided that efforts will be made to reduce the time taken for disposal of applications. However, DGCA has informed that in view of the safety and security requirements, there is no proposal to change the Aircraft Rules, 1937 pertaining to aerial surveys.

Survey for coal deposits in Kanhan and Pench Region

†3046. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Coal India Limited had conducted a survey for coals from Amarwada to Shivpuri in Kanhan and Pench region and had found it to be largest reservoir of coal in Asia;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the action taken in this regard uptill now;

(c) whether new mines have been approved in Harradol and Sharda project in Kanhar and Pench region; and

(d) if so, by when it is likely to be made operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRJ RAVI SHANKER PRASAD): (a) and (b) Coal India Limited has surveyed for coal reserves in Pench and Kanhan area from Shivpuri to Sonpur. Area beyond Sonpur i.e. Sonpur to Amarwada is non coal bearing area as per available information from GSI mapping.

In the coal bearing area between Shivpuri to Sonpur, coal blocks have been delineated after detailed exploration. Total estimated coal reserve in these blocks in 766.4 million tonnes; 661.9 million tonnes being proved category and 104.5 million tonnes indicated category.

(c) and (d) A scheme for Haradol underground mine was approved for a capacity of 0.10 MTY at a capital investment of Rs. 1.62 crores as a replacement of existing Bansi mine.

First stage of forest clearance for Haradol underground mine has been received but second stage clearance is still awaited. Besides, Geo-mining condition is very adverse and reserve is also meagre (0.5 Mt.). Some additional reserve has been found for Bansi mine and the mine is expected to run for some more years. Hence implementation of Haradol underground scheme has been kept in abeyance.

In case of Sharda underground, though project report was formulated for a production capacity of 0.18 MTY at a capital investment of Rs. 16.68 crores, the same was not approved as it was financially non-viable at planning stage itself.

Inadequate attention paid by NALCO to its downstream units

3047. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Bhubaneswar-based National Aluminium Company (NALCO) has not paid adequate attention for the growth of its downstream units in that State;